



# **Cross Connection Drinking Water Branch Fact Sheet**

***What is a cross connection?***

A cross connection is defined as any physical arrangement whereby a public water supply is connected, directly or indirectly, with any secondary water supply system, sewer drain, conduit, pool, storage reservoir, plumbing fixture, boilers or other device which contains or may contain any water, contaminated liquid, or other waste of unknown or unsafe quality that could impart a contaminant to the drinking water as a result of backflow or backsiphonage.

***What did you mean by backflow or backsiphonage ?***

Backflow is a reverse flow condition, created by difference in water pressures, which causes water to flow back into the distribution pipes of a potable water supply from any source or sources other than an intended source. Backsiphonage is a form of backflow caused by a negative or below atmospheric pressure within a water system.

***What could happen if my system has a cross connection?***

A number of diseases are known to be carried by or spread by water. Several of these diseases have been traced to water contamination through cross connection. Some of the diseases caused by cross connection problems were Typhoid Fever, Salmonellosis, Polio, Hepatis, Brucellosis Dysentery and Gastroenteritis. Beside diseases, your water could be contaminated from cross connection with chemicals. Chemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides can contaminate public water supplies because they are often mixed with water for spraying operations.

***How do I know if I have a cross connection problem?***

An inspection of your water system is an easy way to check for cross connections. IDEM recommends that the inspection be performed by an individual certified in the state of Indiana as a backflow prevention inspector/tester or someone familiar with plumbing and backflow hazards. IDEM's permit section has a list of all certified backflow inspectors.

***What are my legal responsibilities as a public water supplier?***

The passage of the Safe Drinking Water Act has made public water systems responsible for the quality of water at the consumer's tap. Therefore all public water systems should maintain an active cross connection control program.

***How do I develop a cross connection control program?***

An effective cross connection program has the following elements, but are not limited to these elements:

Establish a cross connection control ordinance.

Conduct educational and informative meetings defining the cross connection control program.

Systematic inspection of new and existing installations to your water system.

Keep records on all the cross connection control devices.

***Who do I contact if I have any question?***

You should contact the *IDEM Drinking Water Branch*, if you have any question. Our number is 317-308-3280. You may contact the *IDEM Environmental Helpline* at 800-451-6027 and ask them to connect you with 308-3280, or call the *EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline* at 800-426-4791.

***Rule Citations***

170 IAC 6-1-20, 327 IAC 8-10-1, 327 IAC 8-10-2, 327 IAC 8-10-3, 327 IAC 8-10-4, 327 IAC 8-10-5, 327 IAC 8-10-6, 327 IAC 8-10-7, 327 IAC 8-10-8, 327 IAC 8-10-9, 327 IAC 8-10-10, 327 IAC 8-10-11, 675 IAC 16-1.2-35.1 Section P-1505 12.

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